September 15, 2022

Dear Dr. McDowell, Mr. Bennett, and Shannon Ramsby,

My letter today is written to announce that I will be retiring as a Colchester Board of Education Special Education teacher at the end of the 2022-23 school year. It is definitely not easy to leave a place to which I am so deeply devoted, but I believe this is the right time for me to transition to my retirement after many years of teaching.

When I began my association with the Colchester School System, I couldn't have known what an incredible journey lay ahead of me. Each day arriving to teach, I continue to feel excited to walk through the front doors and see students growing and flourishing and colleagues ready to collaborate, create and inspire. I have always felt blessed with a passion for my career and have been fortunate to work beside dedicated teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators who are truly committed to the Colchester educational system and student body. Along the way, I have shared both wonderful life celebrations and excruciating, shattering sorrows with my colleagues. I am also especially grateful to have been kindly supported during my own personal challenges. Through it all, I have made significant, enduring connections and lifelong friendships and memories.

My initial Bacon Academy assignment led to many, many years of teaching in different capacities, as a homebound and afterschool tutor, a special education teacher in the Soar and Life Skills Programs and a Resource and Co-teacher in the social studies, science and math departments at Bacon Academy. I especially enjoyed the rewards of witnessing students graduate and return to share the news of their lives in the community and the appreciation they felt for the attention and skills they gained while in the Colchester School System.

When most recently, I was assigned to William J. Johnston Middle School, my position evolved into a final, gratifying adventure in my long journey. Together with two extraordinarily talented paraprofessionals Shari Bailey and Donna Setschinsky, we collaborated to develop the WJJMS Life Skills Program and create the successful *Broadway Cafe.* These, being the most creative, joyous and memorable years in my career, make it especially difficult for me to say 'goodbye" to a teaching job and people that mean so very much to me.

Overall, I would like to express how appreciative I am for having the opportunity to teach in Colchester as the faculty, staff, students and families have always offered a wonderfully dynamic and enjoyable community that has been a pleasure to serve. Most significantly, however, I have been especially fortunate to teach under the supportive direction and guidance of Principal Christopher Bennett, whose presence has always made teaching and daily school life and climate, an outstandingly positive experience ! Thank you Mr. Bennett !

As I look forward to the upcoming start of the next chapter of my life, I do not know what retirement holds in store for me, except perhaps a more flexible schedule and the opportunity for reflection, time to paint, travel and enjoy the role that is dearest to my heart, as mother and grandmother.

With warmest regards,
Nancy Condon
Special Education Teacher